



Background

Problem-based learning (PBL) is a student-centered learning approach. A number of studies have shown that it is a holistic approach for both pre-clinical and clinical study areas in medical education. Students are active and independent in the learning process and demonstrate improved adaptability in solving new problems with basic pre-clinical principles.

Objectives

To contribute toward reform of the medical education system in China, we introduced PBL for first-year medical students. The aim of the initial orientation week is for students to familiarize themselves with the PBL approach. Goals included establishing self-directed learning skills for them to prepare for the upcoming medical study and assessing student satisfaction with this type of learning experience.

Methods

Forty-two medical students were enrolled in this study. Students were issued background readings (WHO emergency response to Ebola outbreak), followed by two Model World Health Organization (MWHO) discussions (one local round table and one international round table discussion) and an MWHO press conference. Student feedback was received based on the questionnaire in the five-point Likert scale format. Five students were further examined by an in-depth interview.

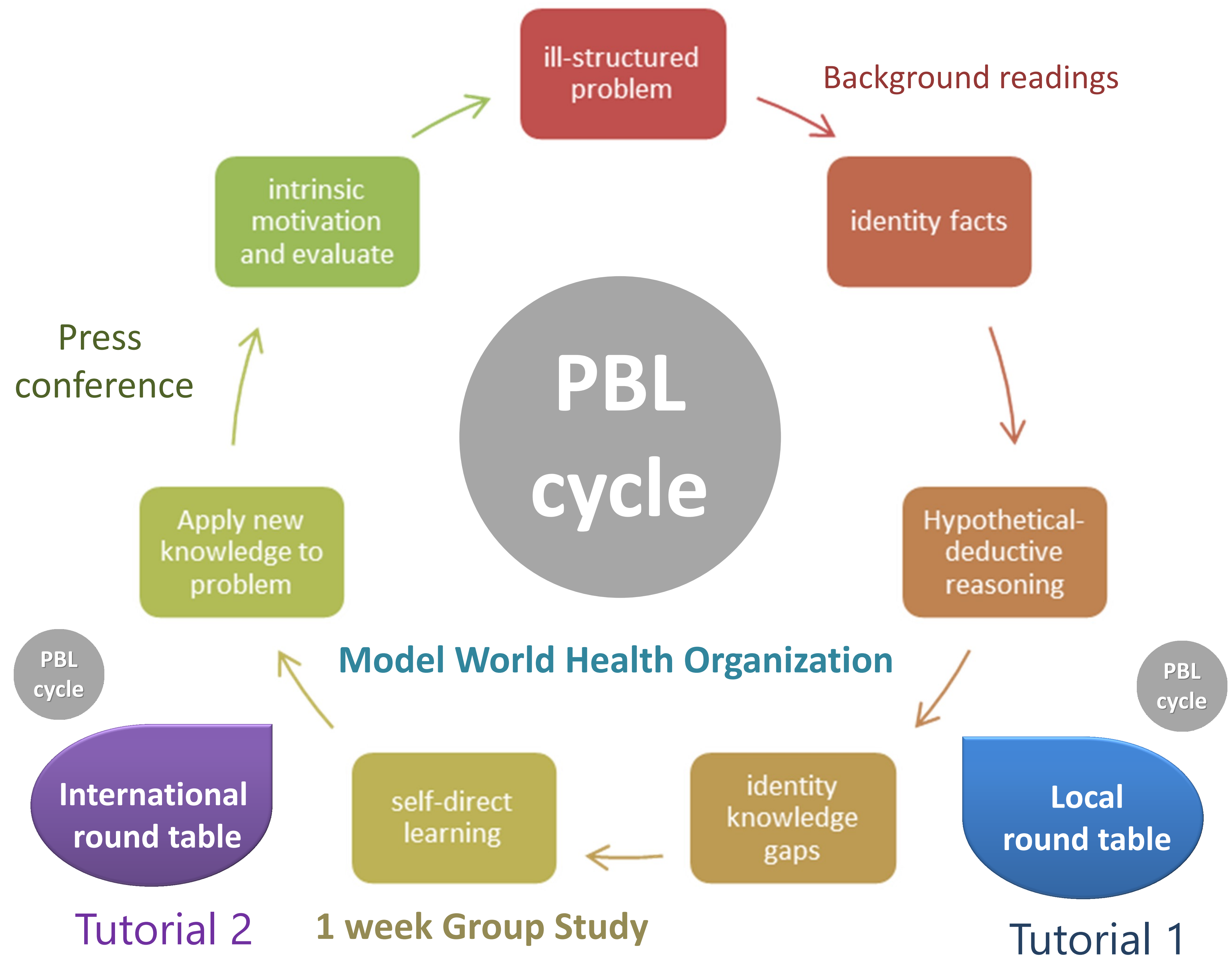


Fig. 1 PBL Cycle (Model World Health Organization)

Results

PBL is used to promote medical students' communication skills and basic clinical knowledge. Students recognize the effectiveness of PBL in medical education. Survey responses indicated that students felt confident that PBL would improve their ability to face new knowledge. Feedback revealed that the majority agreed PBL helped them create interest and motivated their self-directed learning.

References

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